

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 165972

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PDIP, GR, US

SUBJECT: SCHAUFEL REMARKS CONCERNING AEGEAN PROBLEM

1. EUR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST INVITED GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS TO DEPARTMENT JULY 15 TO MEET WITH AMBASSADOR SCHAUFEL FOR DISCUSSION OF MISUNDERSTANDING WHICH SEEMED TO BE DEVELOPING OVER SCHAUFEL REMARKS BEFORE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE (SFRC) CONCERNING THE AEGEAN. MEETING WAS STRUCTURED ALONG LINES SUGGESTED IN PARA 4A OF ATHENS 6565.

2. VEST BEGAN MEETING BY EXPRESSING OUR AWARENESS OF CONCERN AND DIFFICULTY CAUSED TO GREEK GOVERNMENT BY PRESS STORIES OF AMBASSADOR SCHAUFEL REMARKS ON AEGEAN. OUR WISH IN ARRANGING MEETING WAS TO CLEAR UP MISUNDERSTANDING
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AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND NOT ALLOW MATTER TO GET OUT OF PROPORTION.

3. AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS AGREED THAT THIS WAS IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. THE PROBLEM THAT HAD ARISEN WAS REGRETTABLE, AND NO ONE WAS MORE SORRY THAN HE.

4. AMBASSADOR SCHAUFLE said he wished to express his regret over what had occurred. His remarks and intent had

clearly been misinterpreted. All he had sought to convey was that the Aegean question was complex and given the unique juxtaposition of territory between Greece and Turkey, was a particularly difficult matter to resolve. He had not meant to say anything more--and regretted that more had been read into his remarks.

5. Ambassador Alexandrakis said he appreciated these words of clarification. He had hoped from his previous conversation with Schaufle, immediately following his SFRC appearance, and his subsequent telegram to Athens to prevent the kind of controversy that has now arisen. Unfortunately his efforts had not been successful. Now his government had asked him to remain in Washington--he had hoped to go to Greece on leave this weekend--until this matter was clarified. What the GOG wanted now was the official transcript. Alexandrakis implied his government would determine what it would say and do next only after it had examined this document.

6. The conversation closed with Assistant Secretary Vest again expressing regret over the misunderstanding that had developed. He expressed the hope that the explanation

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which now had been provided and the transcript when it became available would allow the matter to be put to rest.

7. Embassy should follow up with MFA to make sure there is clear understanding in Athens of views expressed by Vest and Schaufle along foregoing lines. No specific request was made to Ambassador Alexandrakis for Greek government statement (as suggested in Athens 6565), but Dept has no objection should Embassy wish to suggest this course to MFA. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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